

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of diagnosing lung damage in a mammal, ~~in which mammal there is an absence outwardly of any visible symptoms of lung damage is not exhibiting a symptom specific to lung damage~~, said method comprising screening for an increase in the levels of SP-A and/or SP-B in ~~the~~ a body fluid of said mammal relative to a normal reference level.

2.-3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The method according to claim 31, wherein said early stage lung damage is alveolo-capillary membrane damage.

5.-6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The method according to claim 1 or 3 or 4, wherein said body fluid is blood.

8. (Currently Amended) A method of monitoring for changes in the extent of lung damage in a mammal, ~~in which mammal is not exhibiting a symptom specific to lung damage~~ ~~there is an absence outwardly of any visible symptoms of lung damage~~, said method comprising screening for the modulation of the levels of SP-A and/or SP-B in ~~the~~ a body fluid of said mammal relative to a normal reference level.

9. (Currently Amended) A-The method according to claim 8, wherein said lung damage is alveolo-capillary membrane damage.

10.-11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) A-The method according to claim 118, wherein said body fluid is blood.

13.- 38.(Canceled)

39. (Currently Amended) A-The method according to claim 1, where said mammal is predisposed to developing lung damage.

40. (Canceled)

41. (Currently Amended) A method of diagnosing lung damage in a mammal during a period in which the onset of lung damage cannot otherwise be confirmed without the aid of one or more invasive procedures, said method comprising screening for an increase in the levels of SP-A and/or SP-B in the a body fluid of said mammal relative to a normal reference level.

42. (Currently Amended) A method of monitoring for changes in the extent of lung damage in a mammal, during a period in which the onset of lung damage cannot otherwise be confirmed without the aid of one or more invasive procedures, said method comprising screening for the modulation of the levels of SP-A and/or SP-B in the a body fluid of said mammal relative to a normal reference level.

43. (New) The method according to any one of claims 1, 4, 7-9, 12 and 39 further comprising screening for an increase in the level of SP-A in the body fluid of said mammal relative to the normal reference level.

44. (New) A method of diagnosing early stage lung damage in a mammal, said method comprising screening for an increase in the level of SP-B in a body fluid of said mammal relative to a normal reference level.

45. (New) The method according to claim 44, wherein said early stage lung damage is alveolo-capillary membrane damage.

46. (New) The method according to claim 44 or 45, wherein said body fluid is blood.

47. (New) A method of monitoring for changes in the extent of early stage lung damage in a mammal, said method comprising screening for the modulation of the level of SP-B in a body fluid of said mammal relative to a normal reference level.

48. (New) The method according to claim 47, wherein said early stage lung damage is alveolo-capillary membrane damage.

49. (New) The method according to claim 48, wherein said body fluid is blood.

50. (New) The method according to claim 44, where said mammal is predisposed to developing lung damage.